

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method for managing telephone calls, comprising:
 - 2 calling a contact;
 - 3 presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
 - 4 translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using
 - 5 selected interactive voice response algorithms;
 - 6 connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of
 - 7 the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and
 - 8 providing the operator with the textual words.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein calling includes:
 - 2 selecting the contact from a set of contacts within a contact database.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - 2 classifying the contact as either a person or not a person; and
 - 3 terminating the call, if the contact is not a person.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein presenting includes:
 - 2 selecting the dialog from a set of dialogs stored in a dialog database based
 - 3 upon a set of attributes associated with the contact.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1:
 - 2 further comprising,
 - 3 storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact
 - 4 attributes in a contact database; and
 - 5 wherein providing includes,

6 providing the operator with access to the contact database.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein connecting includes:
2 continuing a next portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact while
3 waiting for the human operator to become available.

1 7. The method of claim 1:
2 further comprising,
3 determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;
4 and
5 wherein connecting includes,
6 connecting the contact to the operator, if the contact is interested.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:
2 applying a set of heuristics to the textual words.

1 9. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:
2 matching the textual words with predetermined keywords associated with
3 interest.

1 10. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:
2 matching the textual words with predetermined keywords associated with
3 disinterest.

1 11. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:
2 applying a set of heuristics to the textual words; and

3 concluding that the contact is interested if a greater number of the heuristics
4 within the set of heuristics indicate the contact's interest.

1 12. The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:
2 applying a set of heuristics to the textual words;
3 associating a score with each heuristic;
4 totaling the scores; and
5 concluding that the contact is interested if the total score is above a
6 predetermined threshold.

1 13. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
2 terminating the call with the contact, if the contact is not interested.

1 14. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
2 performing the translating and determining elements in parallel.

1 15. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
2 performing the determining element after the predetermined portion of the out-
3 calling dialog with the contact is completed.

1 16. A method for managing telephone calls, comprising:
2 calling a contact;
3 presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
4 translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using
5 selected interactive voice response algorithms;

6 connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of
 7 the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed;
 8 providing the operator with the textual words;
 9 storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact attributes in a
 10 contact database;
 11 wherein providing includes, providing the operator with access to the contact
 12 database;
 13 determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;
 14 wherein connecting includes, connecting the contact to the operator, if the
 15 contact is interested; and
 16 terminating the call with the contact, if the contact is not interested.

1 17. A computer-usable medium embodying computer program code for
 2 commanding a computer to manage telephone calls, comprising:
 3 calling a contact;
 4 presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
 5 translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using
 6 selected interactive voice response algorithms;
 7 connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of
 8 the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and
 9 providing the operator with the textual words.

1 18. The medium of claim 17:
 2 further comprising,
 3 storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact
 4 attributes in a contact database; and

5 wherein providing includes,
6 providing the operator with access to the contact database.

1 19. The medium of claim 17 wherein connecting includes:
2 continuing a next portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact while
3 waiting for the human operator to become available.

1 20. The medium of claim 17:
2 further comprising,
3 determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;
4 and
5 wherein connecting includes,
6 connecting the contact to the operator, if the contact is interested.

1 21. A system for managing telephone calls, comprising a:
2 means for calling a contact;
3 means for presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
4 means for translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual
5 words using selected interactive voice response algorithms;
6 means for connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined
7 portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and
8 means for providing the operator with the textual words.

1 22. The system of claim 21, further comprising:
2 means for storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact
3 attributes in a contact database.

1 23. The system of claim 21, further comprising:
 2 means for determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling
 3 dialog.

1 24. A system for managing telephone calls between an operator and a contact,
 2 comprising:
 3 a contact database for storing information on the contact;
 4 a dialog database containing a predetermined out-calling dialog;
 5 a call manager for calling the contact and presenting the contact with the
 6 dialog; and
 7 an interactive voice response module for translating the contact's vocal
 8 responses to the dialog into textual words and storing the words in the contact
 9 database which are accessible to the operator.

1 25. The system of claim 24, wherein the contact database includes:
 2 a set of attributes associated with the contact.